

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NATO 3779

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJ: THE EUROGROUP - TRENDS AND EFFECTS

REF:-) USNATO 3485 (DTG 181530Z JUN 76)

(B) USNATO 2675 (DTG 141050Z MAY 76)

(C) USNATO 3280 (DTG 101630Z JUN 76) (NOTAL)

(C) USNATO 3267 (DTG 100940Z JUN 76)

SUMMARY: IN OUR VIEW, THE INTERPLAY OF SEVERAL POLITICAL AND BUREAUCRATIC FACTORS HAS CONTRIBUTED TO AN EVOLUTIONARY CHANGE IN EUROGROUP'S RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO. FOR THE MOST PART, THIS DEVELOPMENT IS THE NATURAL BY-PRODUCT OF AN UNDERSTANDABLE, AND PRODUCTIVE, DESIRE TO SEEK EUROPEAN SOLUTIONS TO EUROPEAN DEFENSE PROBLEMS. IN FACT, EUROGROUP'S EXISTENCE IS AN EXPRESSION OF EUROPE'S STRIVING FOR UNITY, WHICH, AS SECRETARY KISSINGER MADE CLEAR ON JUNE 25, THE US FULLY SUPPORTS. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE THAT EUROGROUP ACTIVITY IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY MARKED BY A MEASURE
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OF EXCLUSIVITY AND AN APPROACH TO NATO ACTIVITIES CHARACTERISTIC OF A CAUCUS, OR OF AN ALLIANCE WITHIN AN ALLIANCE. IN INSTANCES WHERE EUROGROUP GOALS OR PRIORITIES ARE NOT CONGRUOUS WITH THOSE OF NATO, OR

THOSE OF THE US WITH RESPECT TO NATO, PROGRESS WITHIN THE ALLIANCE HAS BEEN FRUSTRATED. WITHOUT JUDGING WHETHER THE OBVIOUS ADVANTAGES OF GREATER EUROGROUP IDENTITY AND SELF-RELIANCE OUTWEIGH THE DISADVANTAGES TO THE US IN CERTAIN DEFENSE AREAS, IT SEEMS CLEAR TO US THAT EUROGROUP HAS BEGUN MOVING INTO A DIFFERENT POSTURE WHICH THE US WILL HAVE TO RECKON WITH AS WE CHART OUR DEFENSE PLANNING IN A VARIETY OF NATO FORA. WE BELIEVE THAT A FURTHER AND MORE OPEN DIALOGUE WITH EUROGROUP IS APPROPRIATE, AND WE WOULD PLAN TO EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO BELGIAN DEFENSE MINISTER VANDEN BOEYNANTS' ASSURANCES THAT EUROGROUP IS A "GLASS HOUSE." WE WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON VIEWS.

END SUMMARY. AS RECENTLY AS JUNE 25 IN LONDON, SECRETARY KISSINGER STRONGLY REAFFIRMED US SUPPORT FOR EUROPEAN UNITY IN THE CONTEXT OF ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP. HE RECOGNIZED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WILL BE DISAGREEMENTS ON TACTICS, AND SOMETIMES ON PERSPECTIVES, AND CAUTIONED THAT WE DO NOT WANT EUROPE TO FIND ITS IDENTITY IN OPPOSITION TO THE US. IT IS IN THIS BROAD CONTEXT OF US POLICY THAT THIS CABLE ASSESSES THE PERFORMANCE OF EUROGROUP, AN IMPORTANT MANIFESTATION OF EUROPE'S SEARCH FOR UNITY.

2. SINCE ITS FIRST MEETINGS IN 1968, THE EUROGROUP HAS EVOLVED FROM AN INFORMAL GATHERING OF EUROPEAN DEFENSE MINISTERS TO A WELL-ORGANIZED, POLITICALLY COHESIVE BODY WHOSE SPAN OF ACTIVITY LARGELY COVERS THE SPECTRUM OF NATO DEFENSE, PARTICULARLY IN COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS. AN EARLY MILESTONE WAS THE 1970 EUROPEAN DEFENSE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (EDIP), IN WHICH EUROGROUP MEMBERS PROGRAMMED ONE BILLION DOLLARS OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD FOR HIGH-PRIORITY DEFENSE IMPROVEMENTS. SUBSEQUENT EUROGROUP ACTIVITY CENTERED ABOUT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUB-GROUPS -- EURONAD, EUROCOM, EUROLOG, EUROLONGTERM, EUROMED, EUROSTRUCTURE AND EUROTRAINING -- WHICH OPERATE UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF A PARTICULAR NATION AND CONSIST OF EXPERTS FROM THOSE NATIONS THAT WISH TO

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PARTICIPATE IN THESE FIELDS. BETWEEN 1972 AND 1975, EUROGROUP MINISTERS ALSO APPROVED PRINCIPLES FOR COOPERATION IN EQUIPMENT COLLABORATION, TRAINING AND LOGISTICS.

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3. IN ORDER TO PROVIDE CONTINUITY AND SUPPORT BETWEEN MINISTERIAL MEETINGS, EUROGROUP PERMREPS MEET REGULARLY AT NATO HQ TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON MINISTERIAL DECISIONS AND TO MONITOR PROGRESS. IN ADDITION, THE EUROGROUP STAFF GROUP, COMPOSED OF SENIOR OFFICIALS FROM DELEGATIONS -- USUALLY THE DEFENSE ADVISORS -- PROVIDES DAY-TO-DAY CONTINUITY AND LENDS POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE TO EUROGROUP ACTIVITY. THE UK PROVIDES THE ONLY FULL-TIME EUROGROUP STAFF OFFICER, WHO OPERATES OUT OF THE UK DELEGATION IN SUPPORT OF THE STAFF GROUP.

4. UNLIKE NATO, EUROGROUP DOES NOT OPERATE ON A CONSENSUS BASIS. ALL THAT IS REQUIRED TO INITIATE A PROJECT IN ANY AREA IS FOR TWO OR MORE NATIONS TO EXPRESS AN INTEREST. THIS INFORMAL EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND LOOSELY-KNIT COOPERATION AMONG INTERESTED NATIONS MARKED EUROGROUP'S METHOD OF WORK FOR MUCH OF ITS HISTORY AND CONTRIBUTED TO ITS CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO. HOWEVER, SEVERAL FACTORS HAVE CONFIDENTIAL

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BROUGHT ABOUT SUBTLE CHANGES IN THIS RELATIONSHIP:

-AS THE SCOPE OF EUROGROUP ACTIVITY HAS EXPANDED, EUROGROUP MEMBERS HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY AWARE OF DUPLICATION OF EFFORT BETWEEN NATO ON THE ONE HAND AND EUROGROUP SUB-GROUPS ON THE OTHER. THE NEED TO MINIMIZE THIS DUPLICATION HAS CAUSED EUROGROUP NATIONS TO HAVE TO DECIDE IN WHICH FORA THEY WILL CONCENTRATE THEIR EFFORTS. THIS MEANS THAT, IN INSTANCES WHERE ACTIVITY IN A CERTAIN AREA IS ALREADY UNDERWAY IN OR CONTEMPLATED FOR EUROGROUP, EUROPEANS ARE RELUCTANT TO PURSUE THE SAME WORK IN NATO.

-CONVERSELY, MANY EFFORTS ACTIVELY PURSUED IN NATO, SUCH AS WORK IN ARMAMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS, HAVE AT LEAST AN INDIRECT BEARING ONPGUSCL WRK, JND EUROGROUP MEMBERS INCREASINGLY HAVE COORDINATED THEIR POSITIONS FOR USE IN NATO.

-.AS EUROPEAN DEFENSE MINISTERS SUCCEED ONE ANOTHER IN THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF EUROGROUP, EACH UNDERSTANDABLY DESIRES TO MAKE HIS MARK AND, IF NOT TOP HIS PREDECESSORS, AT LEAST STRIVE FOR GREATER EUROPEAN PROGRESS IN SELECTED AREAS. THIS YEARLY CYCLE OF ADDED EMPHASIS, WITH ATTENDANT DEMANDS FOR RESULTS, CAUSES EUROGROUP DELEGATIONS HERE AT NATO HQ TO SPEND AN INCREASINGLY GREATER PORTION OF TIME AND EFFORT ON EUROGROUP ACTIVITY.

-MOST MEMBERS OF THE EUROGROUP STAFF GROUP ALSO SIT ON THE EWG AND DRC. IT IS IN THESE BODIES THAT THE US OFFERS MANY OF ITS INITIATIVES RELATING TO IMPROVEMENT OF NATO DEFENSE. IN EVERY CASE, AND TO AN INCREASING DEGREE, THESE INITIATIVES ARE JUDGED NOT ONLY ON THEIR OWN MERITS BUT ALSO ON HOW THEY COULD CONTRIBUTE TO, OR DETRACT FROM, THE MORE NARROW CONTEXT OF EUROGROUP ACTIVITY.

-EUROPEAN ALLIES ARE KEENLY AWARE AND APPRECIATIVE OF THE INCREASED EMPHASIS THAT THE US HAS PLACED ON NATO OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS. THIS INCREASED CONFIDENTIAL

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EMPHASIS HAS HAD THE COROLLARY EFFECT OF CREATING AMONG EUROGROUP MEMBERS A DEGREE OF CAUTION. THEY FEAR BEING OVERWHELMED OR BEING PLACED IN A POSITION OF CONTINUOUSLY RESPONDING TO US IDEAS. THEY TEND TO SEE THE EUROGROUP, NOT NATO, AS THE PRIMARY FORUM FOR INTRODUCING AND DEVELOPING EUROPEAN DEFENSE INITIATIVES.

5. THE SUM OF THESE FACTORS, TOGETHER WITH THE NATURAL, AND GROWING, DESIRE TO ENHANCE EUROPEAN IDENTIFICATION AND PRIDE, HAVE CREATED WHAT WE CAN BEST CHARACTERIZE AS AN ALLIANCE WITHIN AN ALLIANCE. THIS HAS BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE US. ON THE POSITIVE SIDE, GREATER COOPERATION AMONG EUROPEAN ALLIES HAS STRENGTHENED COHESIVENESS AND, THEREBY, THE POTENTIAL FOR EUROPE TO BECOME MORE SELF-SUPPORTING IN THE DEFENSE SPHERE. MORE EFFECTIVE EUROGROUP COOPERATION HAS ALSO LED TO PROGRESS IN MANY DEFENSE AREAS WHICH ARE OF PRIMARY CONCERN TO EUROPEANS.

6. NEVERTHELESS, IN INSTANCES WHERE EUROGROUP GOALS OR PRIORITIES ARE NOT IDENTICAL WITH THOSE OF NATO,

OR WITH THOSE OF THE US WITH RESPECT TO NATO, PROGRESS
WITHIN THE ALLIANCE HAS BEEN FRUSTRATED. BY REF A, WE
REPORTED THE RESULTS OF THE EUROGROUP MINISTERIAL MEETING
OF JUNE 9, 1976. BASED ON THIS REPORT, AND ON OTHER
DEVELOPMENTS, WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES OF CURRENT
AND POSSIBLE FUTURE FRUSTRATIONS:

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 4 USNATO 3779

-EUROGROUP STAFF GROUP MEMBERS WILL BE ATTENDING
FUTURE EETINGS OF SUB-GROUPS IN ORDER TO (1) FACILITATE
AWARENESS BY EUROGROUP POLITICAL AUTHORITIES OF PROBLEMS
ENCOUNTERED IN THE SUB-GROUPS AND (2) ENSURE THAT THE
SUB-GROUPS ARE AWARE OF, AND CARRYING OUT, MINISTERIAL
DIRECTIONS. THE US PARTICIPATES IN ONLY ONE EUROGROUP
SUB-GROUP, EURO/NATO TRAINING (E/NT), WHICH RECENTLY
ENDORSED A FEASIBILITY STUDY RECOMMENDING THE ESTABLISH-
MENT OF A NATO JOINT JET PILOT TRAINING (JJPT) FACILITY
IN THE US. THE PRESENCE OF A EUROGROUP STAFF GROUP
MEMBER AT FUTURE E/NT MEETINGS COULD HAVE THE EFFECT,
WE BELIEVE, OF HAVING A "POLITICAL COMMISSAR" OVERSEE
E/NT ACTIVITY TO ENSURE THAT INSTANCES SUCH AS THE JJPT
RECOMMENDATION ARE NOT REPEATED, AT LEAST NOT WITHOUT
MORE COMPLETE ANALYSIS OF EUROPEAN SOLUTIONS.

-DURING THE DPC MINISTERIAL DISCUSSION OF
RATIONALIZATION/SPECIALIZATION, VANDEN BOEYNANTS RE-
TURNED TO THE JJPT ISSUE. HE SUMMARIZED THE EUROGROUP
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POSITION ON THIS PROJECT, ON THE BASIS OF WHICH HE SAID THAT BELGIUM COULD NOT SUPPORT THE POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION BY E/NT. IN EFFECT, THEREFORE, EUROGROUP ALSO BLOCKED A UNANIMOUS RECOMMENDATION DEVELOPED BY A NATO BODY, AND MAY EVENTUALLY REVERSE IT.

-AS PART OF NATO'S EFFORTS IN RATIONALIZATION/SPECIALIZATION, THE E/NT CHAIRMAN RECOMMENDED IN THE FALL OF 1974 THAT THE TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR THE NATO TRAINING GROUP BE STRENGTHENED. DRAFT TOR WERE ISSUED FOR MILITARY COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION IN APRIL 1975, BUT NOT APPROVED BECAUSE OF UK OPPOSITION TO STRENGTHENING NATO'S ROLE IN COOPERATIVE TRAINING. FOLLOWING A SERIES OF COMPROMISES ON WORDING, REVISED DRAFT TOR WERE FINALLY AGREED BY THE E/NT IN APRIL 1976, ALTHOUGH IN WEAKER FORM THAN ORIGINALLY PLANNED. WHEN FINAL MILITARY COMMITTEE APPROVAL OF THESE TOR WAS REQUESTED IN MAY 1976, WE UNDERSTAND THAT ALL MILREPS INITIALLY APPROVED; HOWEVER, FORMAL APPROVAL WAS BLOCKED BY SUBSEQUENT INFORMAL INTERVENTION BY SOME EUROGROUP MEMBERS (PRINCIPALLY BELGIUM AND THE UK), WHO WERE APPARENTLY STILL CONCERNED THAT THE NATO SIDE OF E/NT WOULD ASSUME TOO STRONG A POSITION. CURRENTLY, IT APPEARS THAT THE TOR WILL NOT BE REISSUED AND, FOR THE MOMENT, THE MATTER IS MORIBUND.

-IN THE AREA OF STANDARDIZATION OF ARMAMENTS, EURONAD ACTIVITY DURING 1975 WAS CULMINATED BY THE EUROGROUP MINISTERIAL MEETING OF NOV 5, IN WHICH IT WAS AGREED TO ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT EUROPEAN FORUM TO PURSUE COOPERATION IN ARMAMENTS. THIS ACTIVITY, AND THE SUBSEQUENT DECISION TO INVITE FRANCE TO JOIN WHAT IS NOW KNOWN AS THE EUROPEAN PROGRAM GROUP, EFFECTIVELY STYMIED A MAJOR US INITIATIVE IN WHICH WE PROPOSED A COMPREHENSIVE ALLIANCE-WIDE APPROACH TO STANDARDIZATION. AS A RESULT, THE BROADER ASPECTS OF STANDARDIZATION ARE NOW ONLY BEING ADDRESSED IN THE EPG, ON WHICH WE PROVIDED AN OVERVIEW IN REF B. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE NOTE THAT VANDEN BOEYNANTS IS ESPECIALLY ANXIOUS TO FOSTER EUROPEAN UNITY AND, TO THIS END IN THE EPG, IS PARTIAL TO THE FRENCH, WHO MUST PLAY A CENTRAL ROLE IF THE EPG IS TO SUCCEED.

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-EUROGROUP'S "OUTLINE STAFF TARGETS" ESTABLISH AGREED CHARACTERISTICS FOR CERTAIN WEAPONS SYSTEMS, ON THE BASIS OF WHICH EUROGROUP MEMBERS WILL DEVELOP AND PRODUCE THESE WEAPONS. AS REPORTED BY REF A, EURONAD WILL PASS, FOR THE FIRST TIME, A STAFF TARGET TO CNAD ON SHORT-RANGE ANTI-ARMOR WEAPONS. THE NON-EUROGROUP MEMBERS OF CNAD WILL

NOT HAVE HAD A VOICE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS STAFF TARGET, NOR WILL THE NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES HAVE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEW OS THE DESIRED OPERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

-IN NATO COMMUNICATIONS FORA, WE HAVE HAD LONG-STANDING DIFFICULTY IN DEALING WITH THE EUROCOM CAUCUS, IN THAT EUROGROUP MEMBERS USUALLY EITHER HAVE TO ADHERE TO THE SAME POSITION, OR DELAY PROGRESS IN NATO UNTIL THEY CAN RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES. EUROCOM HAS DECLINED TO ALLOW A US OBSERVER TO ATTEND ITS MEETINGS, AND HAS LIMITED US INVOLVEMENT TO A US-EUROCOM WORKING PARTY. AS REPORTED REF A, VANDEN BOEYNANTS GAINED EUROGROUP MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT TO ENSURE THAT EUROCOM REPS ADHERE EVEN MORE CLOSELY TO PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED EUROCOM POSITIONS.

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-THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STAFF HAS RECENTLY DEVELOPED A WORKING PAPER FOR MILITARY COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION ON THE SUBJECT OF NATO LINKS WITH EUROGROUP. THIS WORKING PAPER WOULD HAVE SOUGHT EUROGROUP AGREEMENT TO ALLOW REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES TO ATTEND EUROGROUP SUB-GROUP MEETINGS IN AN OBSERVER STATUS, AND ENCOURAGED EUROGROUP TO ALLOW NATO TO HAVE ACCESS TO ITS PAPERS. HOWEVER, LED BY THE BELGIANS, EUROGROUP MEMBERS SITTING IN THE MILITARY COMMITTEE HAVE STRONGLY OPPOSED THE WORKING PAPER, AND MILITARY

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION OF THIS SUBJECT, ON THE GROUND THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN NATO AND EUROGROUP SHOULD NOT BE INSTITUTIONALIZED. IT WAS THIS MILITARY COMMITTEE ACTIVITY, WE BELIEVE, THAT LED VANDEN BOEYNANTS TO SAY, IN HIS STATEMENT TO DPC MINISTERS ON JUNE 10 (REF C), THAT HIS EUROGROUP COLLEAGUES HAD CONFIRMED THAT "IT IS IMPORTANT NOT TO FORMALIZE OUR WORKING METHODS, NOR OUR LINKS WITH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE."

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7. THE ABOVE EXAMPLES SUMMARIZE SOME VISIBLE EFFECTS OF EUROGROUP ACTIVITY ON NATO WORK, AND WE SUSPECT THAT, LESS VISIBLY, EUROGROUP ACTIVITY IS INFLUENCING EUROPEAN NATIONAL POSITIONS IN OTHER AREAS. A CASE IN POINT MAY BE THE RELUCTANCE AMONG KEY EUROPEAN ALLIES TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HIGH-LEVEL NATO FORUM TO DEAL WITH CONSUMER LOGISTICS. WE NOTE THAT, IN 1975, EUROLOG, AN ESPECIALLY ACTIVE SUB-GROUP, DEVELOPED "PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION IN LOGISTICS" AND IS CONCENTRATING ITS EFFORTS ON LOGISTICS COOPERATION BETWEEN THE LAND FORCES OF NORTHAG, THE AIR FORCES OF 2 ATAF, AND THE NAVIES OPERATING IN THE CHANNEL AND THE NORTH SEA. ON JUNE 9, 1976, EUROGROUP MINISTERS APPROVED "GUIDELINES FOR COLLABORATION IN LOGISTICS FOR FUTURE WEAPONS SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENTS," WHICH COVER BOTH PRODUCER AND CONSUMER LOGISTICS. ALTHOUGH MANY OTHER FACTORS ARE INVOLVED, SUCH AS THE WELL-KNOWN FRG AVERSION TO ESTABLISHING MORE NATO COMMITTEES, IT COULD BE THAT EUROGROUP MEMBERS PREFER TO COOPERATE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF EUROLOG TO ADDRESS EUROPEAN LOGISTICS PROBLEMS, RATHER THAN IN A NATO FORUM WHERE EUROPEAN SOLUTIONS TO EUROPEAN PROBLEMS MIGHT RECEIVE LESS ATTENTION.

8. IT IS CLEAR THAT, TAKEN AS A WHOLE AND CONSIDERING ITS CONTRIBUTION TO EUROPEAN UNITY IN THE DEFENSE FIELD, EUROGROUP ACTIVITY SUPPORTS THE LONG-RANGE DEFENSE INTERESTS OF THE US IN NATO. IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT FRUSTRATIONS AS WELL AS BENEFITS WILL ACCRUE TO THE US. TO MINIMIZE THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF TWO ALLIANCES IN THE SAME HOUSE, WE BELIEVE THAT A MORE OPEN AND FRANK DIALOGUE BETWEEN EUROGROUP AND NATO, OR BETWEEN EUROGROUP AND THE NORTH AMERICAN ALLIES, IS APPROPRIATE. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE BURDEN FOR COOPERATION RESTS WITH EUROGROUP, AND THAT THE US SHOULD NOT BE THE DEMANDEUR TOWARD EUROGROUP.

9. WE NOTE THAT, IN HIS JUNE 10 EUROGROUP STATEMENT TO DEFENSE MINISTERS (REF C), VANDEN BOEYNANTS ALSO SAID THAT "THE EUROGROUP IS SITUATED, AND WISHES TO BE SITUATED, IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE; INDEED, IF WE HAVE FORMED A GROUP, IT IS WITH THE CONCERN

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FOR IMPROVING OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMON DEFENSE.
IN ADDITION, WE ARE A 'GLASS HOUSE" AND WE DESIRE THAT
ADEQUATE INFORMATION PROCEDURES FOR THE ALLIANCE, AND
FOR ALLIANCE MEMBERS WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF EUROGROUP,
BE ESTABLISHED. WE HAVE CHARGED THE STAFF GROUP WITH
THIS." IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH EUROGROUP REPS, AND
WHEN BELGIAN PERMREP SCHUURMANS BRIEFS THE AMBASSADOR
ON THE EUROGROUP MINISTERIAL MEETING
(PARA 15, REF A), WE WILL EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE THAT
WE ATTACH TO VANDEN BOEYNANTS' "GLASS HOUSE."

10. ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON VIEWS.STRAUSZ-HUPE

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